

Please Stop Media Convergence Plans

(The following is a form letter of which I agree with. Following that will be my own quick thoughts on the brewing media ownership debate.)

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

My thoughts:

Distinguished Members,

Please consider carefully the issue of media ownership. From my perch as an ordinary citizen, I am greatly concerned about where our country's media stands presently. To further rollback the diversity of these imperative institutions could easily have lasting effects on the wonderful democracy of the United States of America.

The most essential need of a healthy democracy is a well-informed public. Decreasing the diversity of our media would seem to put the task of informing us into the hands of a select few corporations. This is not acceptable to me. Corporations have very distinct agendas, of which sincerely helping the masses is usually absent. If corporations continue

to gain more control over the airwaves, "we the people" will become more subjugated to the growing circles of influence. I would find this utterly disgusting.

Thank you,

Gary D. Thomson